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THE BALL AND BURNET FAMILIES

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Ball family

THE BALL AND BURNET FAMILIES

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Kate L.Burnet, Ed.

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Dear Brother, Sister, Nephew and Nieces: -

I have been impressed that it was my duty to make out from the geneological papers left by Brother Robertson, (see last page) these sketches of our branch of the Ball and Burnet Families. I present them to you, hoping that we who remember our parents and grandparents, may by these records have our love and loyalty rekindled, and that the younger generation may learn that they have an honored ancestry to emulate in industry, sobriety, honesty, christian integrity and patriotism, and by so doing, perpetuate the good name given to them.

Yours in the bonds of kinship,

(Signed) Kate L. Burnet

Newark, New Jersey

March, 1895

Kindness of Blanche Emmons
June 30, 1957

8 Douglas Place
Verona, New Jersey

JANUARY 29, 1964
LAURA ADELE (JENNINGS) SMITH
B. AUDUBON, IOWA, JAN. 29, 1905

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JOHN J. & LAURA A. SMITH
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The name of Edward Ball appears among the first settlers of Branford, Connecticut, A.D. 1665. The same name appears at intervals until 1666, when Edward Ball was one of the signers of the "fundamental agreement", made by those who were about to remove to Newark. The name of Edward Ball again appears as a signer of the new plantation and Church covenant, dated at Branford, January 20th, 1667 (1668). The name is on the first tax list of Newark, and appears in the town records February 28th, 1672 - 73. He was sheriff of Essex in 1693, committeeman on boundaries, on settlement with the Lord proprietors, Indians, etc. He married Abigail Blatchley, of Connecticut. They had six children:-

Caleb Ball, born probably 1663. His wife's name Sarah:-

Abigail Ball, married Daniel Harrison.

Joseph Ball, died April 25th, 1733, aged 60 years. He married 1st Hannah Harrison
2nd Elizabeth -

Lydia Ball, died August 22, 1742, aged 66 years. She married Joseph Peck.
He came from Connecticut.

Moses Ball, born about 1685; died April 20th, 1747. Married Mary (Tichenor ?)
Had no children. Left numerous bequests to nephews, nieces, and a large tract of land to the First Presbyterian Church of Newark.

Thomas, son of Edward, married Sarah Davis. They had twelve children, nine sons and three daughters. He was a man of good repute, lived an honorable life. He owned about five hundred acres of land on the Rahway River at Vauxhall, between Springfield and Camptown (now Irvington). He left a will, or deed of the partition of his estate among his sons. Several of his sons were under age, and they appear to have hesitated to make the division. It was, however, finally made, signed by the older sons at the time, and left with the widow to be signed by the younger as they came of age. This division, which these young men and boys made by agreement among themselves, trusting to the honor and good faith of each other, was faithfully carried out. The Father died in 1744; the Mother in 1778.

Thomas, Grandson of Edward Ball, the tenth child, and seventh son of Thomas and Sarah Ball, was our great-grandfather. He married Mary Crane, great granddaughter of Jasper Crane, one of the company who came from Branford, Connecticut to settle in Newark. Thomas was an active and clever man, what in America is called a "smart" man. He appears to have studied surveying, and to have gradually gained business in that way. About 1769 he received an appointment of Deputy Surveyor under Lord Stirling, (William Alexander), the then Surveyor General of East Jersey. At this time he seems to have already established a reputation for skill and diligence in his profession, for he relates that when Lord Drummond, a son of the Earl of Perth, came to New York in 1770 to dispose of his father's rights of propriety, he sent for Mr. Ball, and was very urgent for him to take up vacant lands for his Lordship. The surveyor was to pay his Lordship 22 P per acre for good rights, and sell for what he could get, and he could generally get 26 P or 28 P. These lands, it should be remembered, were the refuse of innumerable pickings; sometimes, however, valuable for timber, and perhaps some tracts improved by persons who had no legal title. He was also employed, amongst others, by Frances, widow of John Neville of Perth Amboy, to locate and sell vacant lands. Mr. Ball was now in a fair way to get rich, but as he says himself, - "Having so many irons in the fire, some must burn". However it might have been, he got involved. It would seem at first by being security for his brother David; afterwards by being security on a bond given by some purchasers to the proprietors; consequently he failed. He seems to have been minute and accurate in keeping his accounts, and in making memorandums of all his transactions, many of which have been perserved.

During the Revolutionary War, Mr. Ball was orderly sergeant of Captain Isaac Gillam's company, and employed in the commissary department. He was issuing commissioner at Newark in 1780-81 and quartermaster in 1781-82. He was engaged with his son Abner and others of the Ball family, in the battles of Springfield, Connecticut Farms, and other less important skirmishes. Eight of the Ball's were in those battles in one company. Samuel Ball, his nephew, son of Ezekiel, was killed at Connecticut Farms.

After the War Mr. Ball returned to surveying, and continued actively engaged as surveyor and conveyancer until he was past 70 years of age. In those days law suits respecting the titles of lands were not infrequent, and surveyors were often called

to run the lines after old records. He also, as late as 1795, continued to find vacant lands in Essex and Morris Counties (to which his surveying was restricted by his commission), and charged the proprietors five pounds per 100 acres for his vacant lands. He was born in 1731, died in May 1806.

Thomas and Mary Crane had six children:-

Abner, the oldest (Mrs. Emmons Great Grandfather) born January 1st, 1760, was our Grandfather. He was enrolled in the militia of the County when he was sixteen years old, and served through the whole war; was in the same company with his father. The War closed in effect with the surrender of Cornwallis in 1781, though his duties as guard to the lines did not cease until 1783. At the close of the War he married Rachel Robertson, whose father, John Robertson, was a descendant of the Old Scotch Clan Donachie; and her Mother, Betsey Clark Robertson, was a cousin of Abraham Clark, the signer of the Declaration of Independence. They had one child, Betsy Clark, who married Samuel Burnet.

Abner Ball had learned surveying off his father, and engaged in that business while there was yet wild lands to sell in that part of the country. He taught school in winter until he bought a tract of wild land in Livingston Township, "covered with great trees that had seen the Indian for centuries pursuing the deer or the bear, or tracking a hostile foot". Here he removed in May 1788, and there he lived till the close of his long life, May 21st, 1848, in his 89th year. His wife died February 23, 1845. He received a pension for Revolutionary services after March 4th, 1831. In the year 1790 or '91 he and his wife joined the Baptist Church at Canoe Brook. They were faithful, devoted followers of our Saviour, united in untiring church work, eminent for hospitality and generosity. He served as church clerk and deacon until he was past four score. He was often chosen Assessor of Livingston. Was Justice of the Peace from 1801 to 1834; part of the time Judge of the Court.

There is a tradition that the last family of Indians in the County of Essex at the Commencement of the War of 1756, descended Canoe Brook during the freshet in a canoe of chestnut bark, and entering the Passaic, followed its course and that of the Hudson to Canada; hence the name of the brook and neighborhood. The latter changed to Northfield by act of incorporation in 1801.

The other children of Thomas Ball and Sarah Davis whom I have not mentioned, settled in Newark and vicinity. Their descendants have made homes in nearly every State in the Union; many prominent in church and State. Ezekiel, their fifth son was a carpenter. He built "Tuscan Hall" about 150 years ago in Hilton, near Irvington, New Jersey. The house is still habitable. His son Stephen was a physician, and served as surgeon in the Revolution. Dr. Stephen's son, Frederick, went to Savannah, Georgia; married Eliza Toxey of that place, and settled there. He was a builder and architect, and so in love with his profession he named his children after the orders of architecture, - Boys; Tuscan, and Doric. Girls; Corinthia, Ionic and Annulet. His grand-daughter, Miss E. F. Andrews, is at present a teacher in the Wesleyan College, Macon, Georgia.

The first mention of a Burnet in the Southampton, Long Island records, is this:-

October 13, 1681. "Thomas Burnet hath a lott graunted him on the condicon that he stayo three years in the towne to ymprove yt".

He came from Yorkshire, England, to Lynn, Massachusetts; from there to Southampton, Long Island. A record of his will has been found at Riverhead, the County Seat of Suffolk County, from which the following abstract was taken by W. L. Peletreau, Clerk of Southampton;

I give unto my six children, John, Joel, Lot, Hester, Miriam, and Priscilla, five shillings a piece. I give unto my son Aaron, my house and home lot. I give unto my sons Mordecai and Dan, all my land at a place called Cormorant Point, when they come to the age of one and twenty. I give to my son Matthias, my close (an enclosed tract of land) in the Great Plains. I give to my daughter Lois at her marriage or when she becomes eighteen, ten pounds. I make Mary, my wife, sole executrix.

Dated March 16th 1679-80,
Thomas Burnet".

There are deeds on record from Thomas Burnet to several of his sons showing that he had liberally provided for them before making the bequest of five shillings to each. He was living in September 1683, as his name is found in an assessment roll of Southampton, printed in the second volume of the Documentary History of New York.

Of the sons of Thomas Burnet, Mordecai, about 1683 removed to Elizabethtown, New Jersey, where he was admitted one of the associates under the Indian title. February 7th, 1716 (1717) administration on the estate of Mordecai Burnet, deceased, was granted to his widow, Hannah Burnet. It is not known whether he left any children.

Dan Burnet in 1709 removed with his sons, Ichabod and Daniel, to the vicinity of Elizabethtown, probably to Connecticut Farms, where some of his descendants still live. Dr. Ichabod Burnet, son of Dan, had a son William born in 1730, 2nd December, old style. He graduated at the College of New Jersey in 1749. He settled at Newark as a physician; acquired popularity and good reputation in his profession. When the Revolution broke out, he took an active part against the King. He was selected by his co-patriots as Chairman of the Essex County Committee of Safety; afterwards as Surgeon General, associating with Washington and the other Chiefs of the Army; and was Judge of the Supreme Court of New Jersey. His first wife was Mary, daughter of Nathaniel Camp at Newark; second, widow of Anthony Rutgers, daughter of Nicholas Governour. One of his sons, Ichabod, was Aid-de-camp to General Green in the Revolution.

Matthias Burnet settled in East Hampton, Long Island. He was Justice of the Peace, Captain, and seems to have been a successful business man. His will is on record, dated July 1745, and proved April 3rd, 1746. He styles himself, - "yeoman", leaves -

To my well beloved wife, Elizabeth, 200 in silver, Indian girl Tamer, and other property. To my grandson, Burnet, all my books, gun and sword, negro Peter, Indian boy John, etc. To my four grandsons, Jeremiah, Eliezer, Annanias and Abraham, each £ 120. To my four granddaughters each £ 50.

Grandson Burnet, sole Executor".

The descendants of his daughter, Mrs. Miller, form several very respectable families.

Aaron Burnet settled at Madison, New Jersey. His head-stone there shows that he died September, 1755, in his 100th year. He is the only son of Thomas, whose age is ascertained. The daughters, Miriam and Priscilla married brothers by the name of Fithian.

Lot Burnet, our ancestor, married Phebe Mills, October 20th, 1675. The census list of 1698 gives the names of six sons, Joseph, David, Nathan, Jonathan, Samuel, Ephraim and Isaac. Samuel married Mordecai Bell of New York. Their son Samuel married Lucy Chase. They had three sons and four daughters. The exact order of birth is lost; it is known, however, that Joseph was the oldest, and David the youngest son.

The four daughters of [illegible] and Lucy [illegible] were Polly, married David Lang, no children; [illegible] married a [illegible], no children; Jane married a Cory, had two children; Ruth married [illegible], no children. Joseph enlisted in the army of the Revolution. He died in the service at West Point on the Hudson River. He never married. David served in the War of the Revolution. He did not enlist, but engaged as a spy in service at the Point, to watch and report the movements of the enemy in New York. He was in the Battle of Springfield. "His house, which was situated near Hobarts, Short Hills, was a asylum for the poor and fatigued soldiers, especially in the winter time, when [illegible] and repassing from one place to the other". It seems he left the Point before the close of the War, and went to Chatham, and engaged in baking bread for the army under the direction of the French, who had erected ovens there for that purpose. He married Sarah Willis, had one son, two daughters. He died at his home in Madison, December 24th, 1842, aged 87. This information is from a letter of David's grandson, Charles Burnet [illegible] April 23rd, 1850.

Samuel (his grandfather) also served during the Revolution as militiaman. He married Ruth Hedges, daughter of Ismael, a descendant of William Hedges, one of the early settlers of West Hampton, Long Island. He was a farmer and school teacher. After the War he moved to Pleasant Valley, Morris County. In April, 1799, he moved to Livingston, and lived on the farm in the house where his grandson, Samuel H. Burnet now lives. After [illegible] years, ill health caused him to give up farming, and he removed to Chatham, where he died June 4th, 1819, in the 66th year of his age. His widow died June 7th, 1824 in her 66th year. They were members of the Presbyterian Church, and highly respected as sincere and consistent christians. Their children always spoke of them with affectionate reverence. They had ten children:

Joseph, born September 12th, 1779, died June 30th, 1818.
John Hedges, born July 31st 1781; died March 6th 1851, at Stroudsburg, Pa.
Samuel, born April 21st 1783; died September 3rd 1865.
David, born December 30th, 1784; died May 11th 1875.
Sarah, born March 23rd 1787; died February 23rd, 1831.
Thomas Clark Hedges, born [illegible] 16th 1790; died October [illegible] 1869.
Betsey Lambert, born August 4th, 1792; died May 15 1839.
Sophia, born March 23rd, 1795; died November 9th, 1877.
Mary, born April 26th, 1798; died November 24th 1864.
Lewis Woodhill, born June 25th, 1801; died June 16th, 1881.
All married and left families but Phebe.

Samuel Burnet, son of Samuel and Ruth Hedges Burnet, was married to Betsey Clark, daughter of Abner and Rachel Robinson Ball, January 2nd, 1803, by Reverend Moses Edwards, pastor of the Northfield Baptist Church, Livingston, New Jersey. Their union was a happy one. The husband used to say that he was "blest with one of the best companions a man ever had". Her many christian and domestic virtues made her memory precious with all who knew her. Truly her verse in Proverbs was "Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also and he praiseth her". She was a devoted member of the church at Northfield from childhood. There was but one week's difference in their ages. He was born April 21st; she on the 28th, 1783. Their blissful companionship ended, in this world, by her death on February 23rd, 1845. His second marriage to Harriet Jennings, widow of Zadoc Beckley, was in March, 1847. She died September 15, 1861. He survived her four [illegible]. In 1847 he purchased the place in Livingston, near Northfield, that his father owned, [illegible] Samuel H. Burnet's - and lived there fifty seven years. He was [illegible] In early life he began to carry the old "Sentinel of Freedom" [illegible] through Essex County, far into the hills of old Morris. [illegible] Every Thursday morning, fill his saddle bags with [illegible] papers, [illegible] the country just out of Newark, and through Springfield and Livingston until he reached his own home. The next morning he would go to Newark [illegible] his papers till he reached Morristown, take in a supply there of the "Daily Journal of Commerce", and any other papers published in that village, and spend the next two days distributing them among the hills of Morris County, returning home late on Thursday evening. In addition to this long and laborious task, he was for five years

constable, and had to ride miles out of his way to serve process, and sometimes other business would keep him in the saddle so that he had ridden, I think he said, as much as eighty miles in one day and evening. After years of such toil, he devoted himself to improving his farm, which he had enlarged by successive purchases. He did not have the advantages of a liberal education; but having acquired by study and aptitude a fair degree of skill in the law, he became in great request as a manager of causes before Justices of the Peace, and gained suits when William Pennington, Asa Whitewood, Theodore Frelinghuysen, and others of their contemporaries were the opposing counsel. Gifted as a speaker, he was often chosen as the orator of the day when his townsmen got up a celebration of the Fourth of July and Washington's Birthday. He was a staunch Whig, an ardent Republican and firm patriot. His fellow citizens of Livingston from the first organization of the town in 1813, till his age made it desirable for him to retire, testified their confidence in his integrity and business talent, by selecting him almost every year for some responsible office, Assessor, Town Clerk, Judge of Election, etc. He was appointed Commissioner for taking acknowledgement and Proof of Deeds for Essex County in 1841 by Governor Pennington, and appointed a Master in the Court of Chancery by Chancellor Oliver S. Halsted in 1851. He was a man of prayer, and a daily reader of the Bible; and although he differed on doctrinal points with the Baptist Church, he was a regular attendant with his family, and gave liberally as his means allowed for its support. Samuel and Betsey Clark Ball Burnet had eleven children.

1. Rachel Ball, born November 1st, 1803, married David M. Jennings, of Livingston, December 2nd, 1827, by Reverend Augustine Elliott; died February 18th, 1834.

2. Moses Ball, born September 15th, 1805, married Mary, daughter of Robert French of Springfield, New Jersey, April 2nd, 1829 by Reverend Mr. Gray. She died April 24th, 1877. He dies March 9th, 1891.

3. Phebe Robertson, born March 5th, 1807, married Charles H. Jennings of Livingston, March 11th, 1827, by Reverend Aaron Condit of Hanover; died November 13th, 1860.

4. John Robertson, born December 26th, 1808, lost his hearing when he was eight years old, married at the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, New York, by Reverend Dr. Milner to Phebe, daughter of Jonathan Osborn of Castile, Genesee County, New York, July 31st 1839; died June 18th 1874.

5. Ellen Clark, born June 4th, 1811, married Josiah S. Ward of Bloomfield, March 6th, 1846; died March 10th, 1883.

6. Ruth Ludlum, born March 24th, 1813, married Ashbel M. Squier of Livingston, by Reverend Mr. Ogden of Chatham, September 24th, 1835; died September 26th, 1841.

7. Thomas Barnet, born March 11th, 1815, married Hannah Maria, daughter of Enoch Edwards of Northfield, Livingston, by Reverend Augustine Elliott, December 29th, 1839. She died December third, 1866. Second marriage to Louisa J., daughter of Pell T. Collins of Livingston, by Reverend Mr. Bastian July 2nd 1867.

8. Maria Ann, born February 25th, 1817, married Smith P. Ward of Livingston, by Reverend John Watson, November 7th 1839; died March 27th, 1855.

9. Jane Sophia, born December 11th, 1818, married Wm H. Parsil of Millburn, by Reverend John Watson, November 7th 1839; died March 1st 1885.

10. Sarah Freneau, born June 22nd 1825, married John Winans Squier of Livingston, by Reverend Isaac M. Church, September 3rd 1842.

11. Gilbert Stevens Burnet, born March 25th 1827.

Thomas Burnet, the first mentioned, was a relative of Bishop Gilbert Burnet, whose son William was Colonial Governor of New Jersey and New York from 1720 to 1727; after that, Governor of Massachusetts till his death in 1729.

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